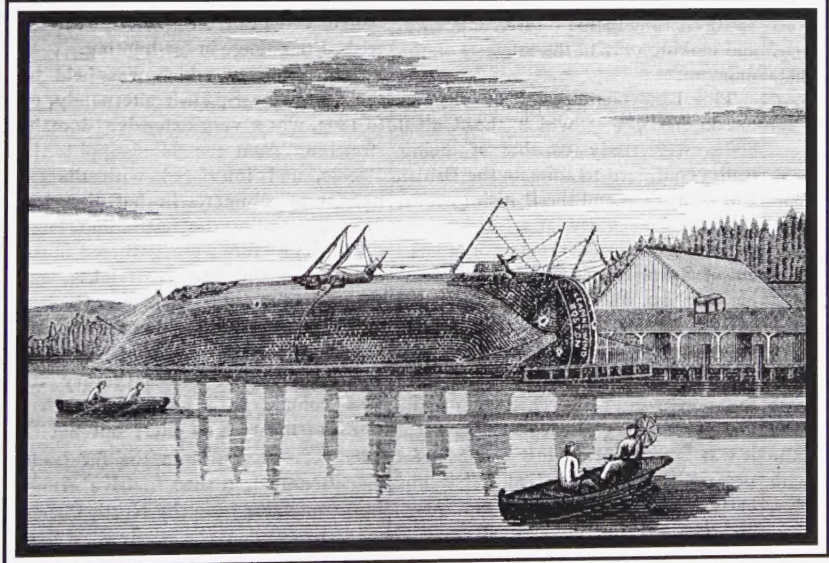
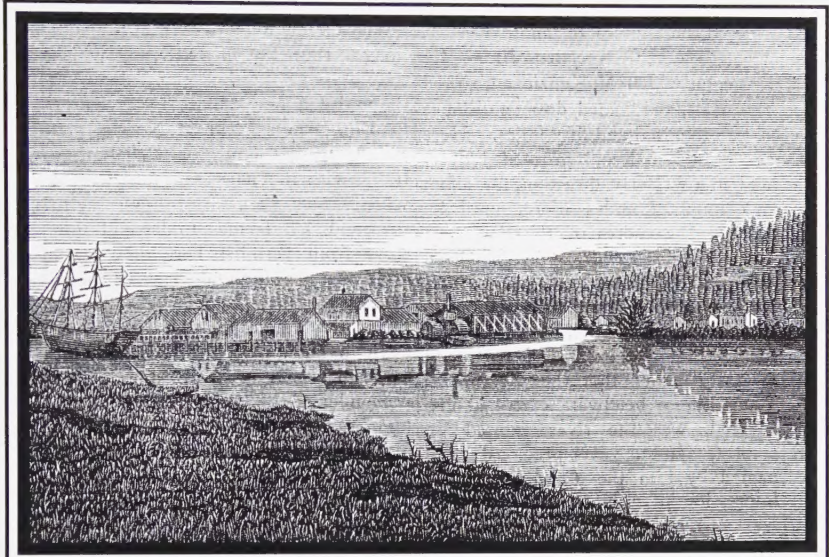
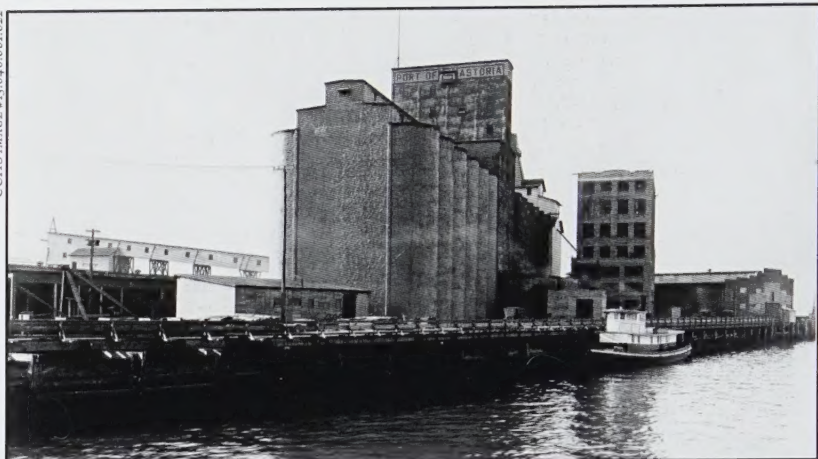


CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

CUMTUX



VOL. 43, No. 1—WINTER 2023



VIEW OF PIER 1 AT THE PORT OF ASTORIA WITH THE ASTORIA FLOUR MILL AND GRAIN ELEVATORS AND THE BOAT JORDAN, CA. 1920

In This Issue ...

Two large buildings dominated Astoria's west end for many years: The Power Plant on Youngs Bay, just east of Astoria High School, and the Pillsbury Flour Mill at the Port of Astoria. The flour mill's purposeful destruction ended a local business that employed many of our residents. Perhaps more than that, it was a dream that took decades of work by many to achieve.

Wheat, salmon, and lumber were our biggest exports from the earliest days of transporting cargo across the Columbia River bar to foreign shores. Clatsop County contributed a large portion of the salmon and lumber from Oregon and Washington. Still needed here was a proper flour mill to turn grain into flour, thus increasing local profits. Jim Aalberg created a timeline of the efforts of local residents to do this. A related story is by John Nellor, a former AHS teacher who had written about the Pillsbury Flour Mill long ago.

In this issue, Aalberg also writes about early ship repair at the first dry dock on the Columbia River at Westport.

More and more stories of people are appearing on local Find-A-Grave websites due to the efforts of Jan Anderson and her sister, Bev Thomen. Bev explains how diphtheria, once one of the most common childhood diseases, has been controlled and nearly extinguished due to following simple precautions with the help of well-trained physicians and nurses.

—The Editor

**CLATSOP COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

714 Exchange St.
P.O. Box 88
Astoria, Oregon 97103-0088
(503) 325-2203
info@astoriamuseums.org
www.astoriamuseums.org

Heritage Museum
16th and Exchange St., Astoria

Flavel House Museum
8th and Duane St., Astoria

Oregon Film Museum
7th and Duane St., Astoria

Uppertown Firefighters Museum
30th and Marine Drive, Astoria

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Luke Colvin, Astoria, OR
President

David Reid, Astoria, OR
Vice-President

Kent Easom, Coeur d'Alene, ID
Secretary

Kent Ivanoff, Astoria, OR
Treasurer

Andrew Bornstein, Bellingham, WA
Mike Brosius, Astoria, OR
Brett Estes, Astoria, OR
Craig Hoppes, Astoria, OR
Julie Kovatch, Astoria, OR
Patricia Roberts, Gearhart, OR
Randy Stemper, Astoria, OR
Dulcye Taylor, Astoria, OR
Willis Van Dusen, Astoria, OR

STAFF

McAndrew Burns
Executive Director

Sam Rascoe
Director of Marketing

Liisa Penner
Archivist & Cumtux Editor

Chelsea Vaughn
Curator

Matt Powers
Facilities Manager

Julie Burpee
Digital Archivist

Michael Wentworth
Cumtux Support

CUMTUX

CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

QUARTERLY

VOL. 43, No. 1 — WINTER 2023

Copyright © 2023 Clatsop County Historical Society
(ISSN 1083-9216)

Contents:

- 1 Westport, Oregon
Home of the First "Dry Dock"
on the Columbia River:
by Jim Aalberg
- 11 Early Boat Construction
at Westport
by Jim Aalberg
- 13 Timeline of Astoria Flour Mill
and Grain Elevators
compiled by Jim Aalberg
- 17 Pillsbury Mill Celebrates
25th Year Here Friday
by John Nellor
- 26 3,000 Astorians Join
Pillsbury Celebration
- 32 Death By Diphtheria
by Bev Thomen
- 44 A New Life in America
By Mary Jane Sjoblom

FRONT COVER:

TWO ENGRAVINGS FROM THE WEST SHORE MAGAZINE
OF THE LEADING WIND HOVE DOWN AT WESTPORT,
OREGON, 1878.

CUMTUX: Chinook jargon:
"To know...to inform"

WESTPORT, OREGON HOME OF THE FIRST “DRY DOCK” ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER: THE “HEAVING DOWN” OF THE *LEADING WIND*

by Jim Aalberg

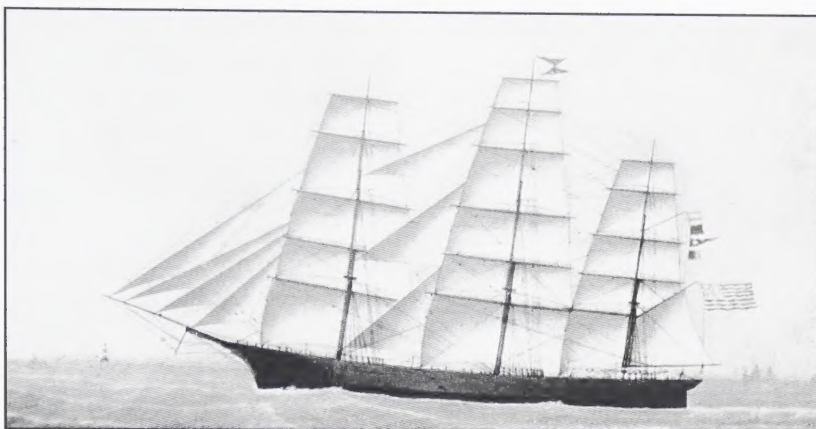
JOHN WEST WAS a Scottish immigrant born in 1809 in Riccarton Hills near Linlithgow, Scotland. He settled in Westport, Oregon (his namesake town) in 1851. The detailed story of “Captain” John West and his historical impact on the beginnings of Clatsop County can be found in *Cumtux* Vol. 25, No. 1, Winter 2005, and in the Clatsop County Historical Society’s published book *Westport Oregon Home of the Big Sticks and Gold Medal Salmon*. John was an extremely skilled millwright and a very innovative individual, to which the following story attests.

The following is from the cover page of the April 1878 issue of the *West Shore*, an early literary magazine published in Portland, Oregon, from 1875-1891 by Leopold Samuel. The purpose of the *West Shore* magazine was to promote a positive image of the Pacific Northwest and encourage economic growth and migration to the region.

Oregon's Future Dry Dock

We give our readers, on this page, a view of the “heaving down” of the American ship *Leading Wind* of Boston, Mass., at Westport, Oregon. This fine ship, having met with an accident necessitating the examination of her bottom, it was at first thought that the only course with so large a vessel would be to send her to San Francisco. But, some of our energetic Oregonians, suggesting the perfect ease with which she could be ‘Hove down’ at the quiet little slough at Westport, the proper authorities proceeded to carry the idea into execution, with perfect success in every particular. The ship’s keel was exposed, and the necessary repairs effected under very unfavorable circumstances of weather, in a thoroughly workman-like manner, by Mr. Higgins, master shipwright, long and favorably known on Puget Sound.

We understand that Capt. West, the enterprising proprietor of Westport, and one of the earliest pioneers in the fisheries for salmon, is so pleased with the success of the operation that he offers, if a stock company can be organized, every facility for a good dock, where, with proper sheds and appliances already on the premises, vessels of the



THE LEADING WIND

largest size can be taken in, their ballast discharged and stiffening enough put on board to allow them to come to Portland and complete their loading of wheat. This would afford our British friends much needed facility to clean the bottoms of their iron ships at comparatively small expense and thus ensure them better home passages whether the dock project is carried out or not, a good heaving down wharf with necessary sheds and float, blacksmith shop and sawmill handy, are fixed facts at Westport, and it marks an era of progress in our waters which our merchants and ship-masters will welcome as another advance in our commercial prosperity.

Westport is a small village of about 150 permanent inhabitants, but, during the fishing season, it usually receives an addition of 200, most of them being employed in Capt. West's extensive cannery. It is pleasantly located on a slough which is really an arm of the Columbia River, and any ship which can cross the Columbia River bar can sail to Westport with perfect ease.

Stating that Westport was the location of Oregon's first "dry dock" is a bit of a hyperbole by the writer of the *West Shore* article. Some background on the historical practice of heaving down a sailing vessel is as follows.

Careening, also known as heaving down, is a method of gaining access to the hull of a sailing vessel without the use of a dry dock to either clean or repair the hull. The vessel is grounded broadside onto a steep beach or a dock, the latter being the case at Westport. The ship is then pulled over with tackles from the mastheads to secure points on the dock. This brings one side of the hull out of the water (see photos). The process is often assisted by moving ballast to one side of the hull. When work was completed on one side of the hull, the ship could be floated off, and the



HENRY WITH HIS BONGOS.

short while to party with friends. But they decided to sneak out once the girls were settled in bed. Sneaking out was not very quiet because

the car lights were pointed right at the window where the girls were supposedly bedded down. So once Grandma and Grandpa were out of sight, the girls got out the popcorn and soda and had their own party. In the meantime, Katri and Toivo had joined others at a party at the Pig and Pancake. Well, the party got a little too loud, and the local police were called in. Those partying were told to sit tight and not to leave until the booze wore off. In the meantime, the party girls at home were tired and had gone to bed. The girls still laugh about Grandma and Grandpa getting busted by the cops.

And so, end of story. You can never predict what will happen with the Sjobloms, but you can count on it being an adventure. ➤



HENRI'S BOOTS WORN FROM FINLAND.



KATRI'S BIRCH BARK PURSE.

Silas M. Smith tells a good story which shows how people put money for safe keeping in pioneer days. Mr. Lampson, whose son is now a prominent citizen of Portland, did business then on the Clatsop plains. Having occasion to visit Astoria he put \$2,500 in gold \$20 pieces in a barrel of flour. Meantime flour fell short at Solomon Smith's and John Hobson, who lived with him at the time, called at Mr. Lampson's for a barrel. He took one at random and brought it home. In the evening when he opened it, out rolled the gold pieces. He and Mr. Smith were, of course, astonished, and did

not know what to make of it. They gathered up the coins and put them safely away. Mr. Lampson returned home the same evening, and on learning that Mr. Hobson had got a barrel of flour, he looked around, and found that the barrel which had the gold was missing. He set out for Mr. Smith's where he was delighted to find his treasure intact.

It may be noted that the barrel contained Chilean flour, for this slope, which now produces millions of bushels of wheat and exports many thousand barrels of flour, then imported flour from Chile. ➤

HUPAISAA JOULUA

—ja—

HYVÄÄ UUTTA VUOTTA

**Toivotamme kaikille liiketuttavillemme ja
ystävillemme**

ASTORIA FLOUR MILL CO.

ASTORIA PATENT JAUHOJEN VALMISTAJAT

AD FROM TOVERI 12/18/1918

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

WE WISH ALL OUR BUSINESS ACQUAINTANCES AND FRIENDS

ASTORIA PATENT FLOUR MANUFACTURERS

